

BRIEF TALES AND GOSSIP

Stories and Opinions Picked Up in the By-Ways of Indianapolis.

How an Enterprising Real-Estate Agent Got the Better of a Hackman—A Christmas Dream—Monument Controversy.

In this wide-awake, busy, pushing world it is not often that an American citizen gets the best of a hackman, but Mr. George A. Boeckling, the real estate man, thinks he did one night not long ago. On this occasion a gentleman from out of town was visiting him, and he desired to show him every courtesy, and incidentally the beauties of certain property which he had constructed in the north part of town. So on the evening in question he ordered a hack for the use of himself and friend, and told the Jehu to drive up to a certain street, then cross over and drive back up another street, where the property he wished to show was located. When this order was given to the driver, however, he refused to follow it out, being willing only to take the shortest course. Mr. Boeckling at once became exasperated, and irately exclaimed: "You are discharged. I hired this hack for a certain time, but you cannot drive it. Get down, and I will drive myself."

In this way the hackman was persuaded to relinquish his hack and Mr. Boeckling mounted the box and drove on leaving the hackman to his own reflections under the shade of a tree through the leaves of which the gentle rain trickled. After driving his guest around and showing him what he had mapped out, the improvised Jehu hitched the team near his own residence, a mile from the center of town and telephoned to the stable that it

negro suddenly came face to face with him as he stood, hatchet in hand, about to nail up a box. The brother came near having to fight for his life. The negro thought that it was the student, and that he had at last been sent for. Grasping the hatchet in one hand, and doubling up his fist, he prepared to fight to the bitter end, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that matters were explained to him.

It is related that an Irish parishioner in a Catholic Church, before the days of natural gas, incurred the displeasure of the priest. The cowed minister announced that forty tons of coal would be needed for the winter, and urged that each contribute something toward the expense. But the parishioner in view shook his head when the box was pushed under his nose. The holy man in the pulpit did not like the act, and the next day took the man to task. "Patrick," said he, "I did not like the way you acted yesterday at mass. Why did you not contribute? You know we have to buy coal."

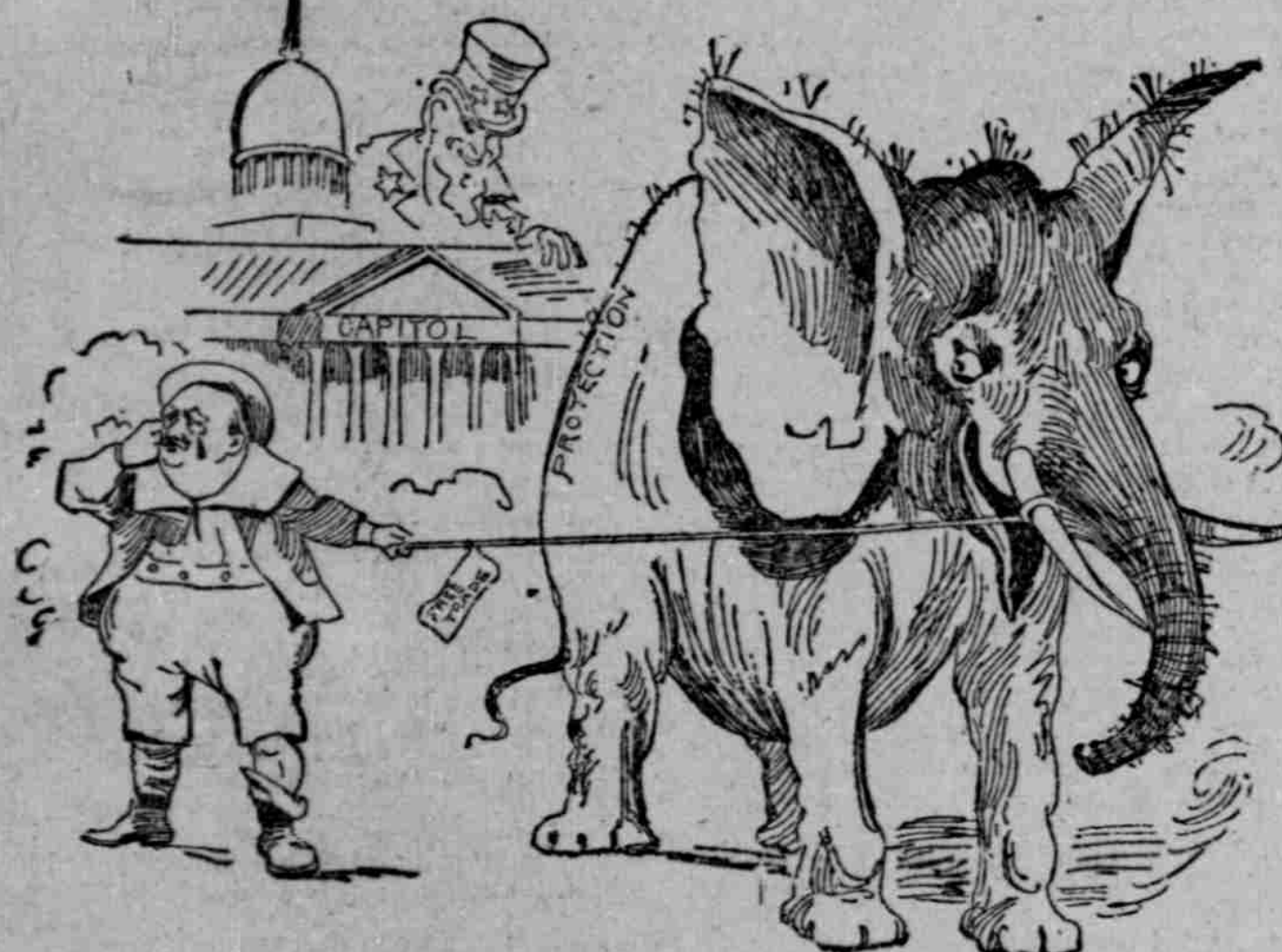
"Yes, your reverence," answered Patrick. "How much did you say would be needed?" "Forty tons, Pat."

"Ah, your reverence, I'm on to the racket. Don't you think that I know the church is heated by steam?"

Attorney Smith, of Rushville, is a cynic as far as regards newspaper veracity. "Now take the Norris case in your Marion county courts a few weeks ago," said he. "The old man, you remember, came to Indianapolis to be treated for cancer, and married the Crawford girl. There was a disagreement and a wrangle over property matters, then a separation and a divorce. The affair made a good story, if told according to facts, and was not improved by misstatements. In the Sentinel account I counted nine variations from the truth, and a Cincinnati paper had twenty-one." They made him out a grandfather, whereas he was an old bachelor when he was married. The variations from the facts, to those who knew the case, were rather amusing.

They were talking of cards, he and she and he expressed a contempt for the past-

HE WILL BE BACK IN '96.



UNCLE SAM: "I guess that small boy wishes that the man who left that animal with him would hurry back."—New York Press.

was there, but his instructions were that under no circumstances was the driver to start out with it to be sent after it. The liverman, who, by the way, was Lee Holtzman, was very wrath when he heard what his man had done, but, when a short time later, that individual dragged himself in and related that his hack had been taken away from him the stony heart warmed up and a reprimand was given. Instead of the discharge that had previously been decided upon.

Ed Rumpier, private secretary to the general manager of the P. & E. railroad, tells this story of a dream that lately visited him: "I was not feeling very well, and retired early, almost immediately falling to sleep. Soon after it seemed I was accosted by a man who was very large, very fat, and very familiar. He had a huge yellow nose, that hung down between his eyes like a pear. He wanted me to buy a certain wheelbarrow, that belonged, he said, to his wife. I assured him I had no use for it, but he said: 'You don't understand me. I want you to buy it for your wife—Christmas present!' At the conclusion of this explanation he jabbed his nose with his finger, and I was so cold I shivered. I told him to stand a little way from the phone and talk, but he would not, and kept his nose in my ear while he jabbered on about Christmas and the wheelbarrow. I remember gasping out that I had no wife as I struggled to free myself from the monster, when I woke up. Some of the boys had dropped the cake of soap between my pillows, one end of which was in my ear."

"The discussion regarding the dishonoring or debasing the soldiers' monument from the original and modern design or purpose which brought it into existence so successfully accomplished by the fastening upon it of the Mexican-date figures will not down, and properly so," said Dr. W. B. Clark. "If the desire was to go back of the modern records and search antiquity this should have been done earlier, especially in regard to the shape of the tribute itself, and then an artistic conforming to the proprieties created by the aesthetic advance of the world would have resulted in our monument being an arch. All the other criticisms and wrangles I have seen are as nothing compared to this one point. The monument or shaft was among the ancients simply a symbol of the male and of male supremacy, while the modern symbol is the arch, typical of the union and equality of the sexes. The women of old, the modern monument, the arch, the arch period, the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. Our monumental tribute started out to assist in the immortalization of Indiana's defenders from the savages and results of secession. Did not Indiana's women have a share in that great and glorious work? Did not her soldiers' mothers, wives, daughters, sisters and sweethearts participate in that struggle, and at greater mental cost and physical self-denial than did the men? And shall they not be honored in and by the monument, too? This raises a question for the ideal and practical artists to decide—can an arch be built now at the summit capable of supporting the much-criticized statue designed as the crowning piece? If they decide it cannot be done I am in favor of finishing the top of the monument in the form of a torch, leaving off that statue, so that we can testify to the ages that the men of Indiana thus early appreciated the services of their women and gave them equal place by their sides in war and conquest as well as in defeat and peace."

There has always been a superstitious terror among a larger portion of colored people of being delivered over to the dissecting table. They believe that if their bodies are mutilated in that manner, even after they are cold in death, it portends some great disaster in the other world, and the greatest grief results among the friends of some luckless person who is so disposed of.

There is a colored man who drives a delivery wagon for a certain large house who lives in mortal terror of his life. It happens that he has to load and unload his goods immediately under the office of an eminent surgeon, who has a half dozen or more of students of medicine with him all of the time. Of these students the darky has the most absolute horror. One of them happened to brush against him one day, and when he saw what was actually shivered in his boots. He said, and his teeth rattled as the words came out:

"Go 'long' way from me. I knows what you're all want. Youse medical students, an' wants fer to cut me up. De boss doctor upstairs told me so."

One of the students has a brother who resembles him closely, and one day the

boards as a waste of time without commensurate pleasure.

"I would far rather go to the theater," said he.

"Yes," said she, with a toss of the head, "but the most of the boys in my set seem to think it is a sin to go to the theater. They never say anything about it."

A knot of people were telling stories about Christmas presents a few days ago. There were those who could remember when there were few presents, and others who told of the growth of the custom to its present proportions, which means temporary bankruptcy for many the first month of the year. Finally, one elderly person, who had a reputation for that sort of economics known as skinflint, told of the first Christmas present he made his wife, long since dead, fortunate soul. "My wife," said he, "wanted me to get something for her to be hung on the Christmas tree at the church. I told her it was nonsense, but she spoke of it several times, and I decided to get something. Then we were long-legged boots that came off dreadful hard. It was often a great deal of trouble to get one off. I went to town, and I declare I saw a patent bootjack, costing a quarter. I finally got one for 20 cents and I had it hung on the Christmas tree as a present for my wife." "But she had no use for it," said a listener. "No, but I had; and then it was painted red and looked real nice hangin' on the wall. But the church was full of people who were fools, and they laughed entirely regardless of the sacred place they were in." "I would have broke your head with it," said an emphatic miss, "if I had been your wife."

"No you wouldn't," said another, "his is one of the heads that nothing in this world can break, except a stone-crusher." "You may laugh all you want, but I have that boot-jack now, and I never use it but what I think of my departed Amanda. I wear long-legged boots now."

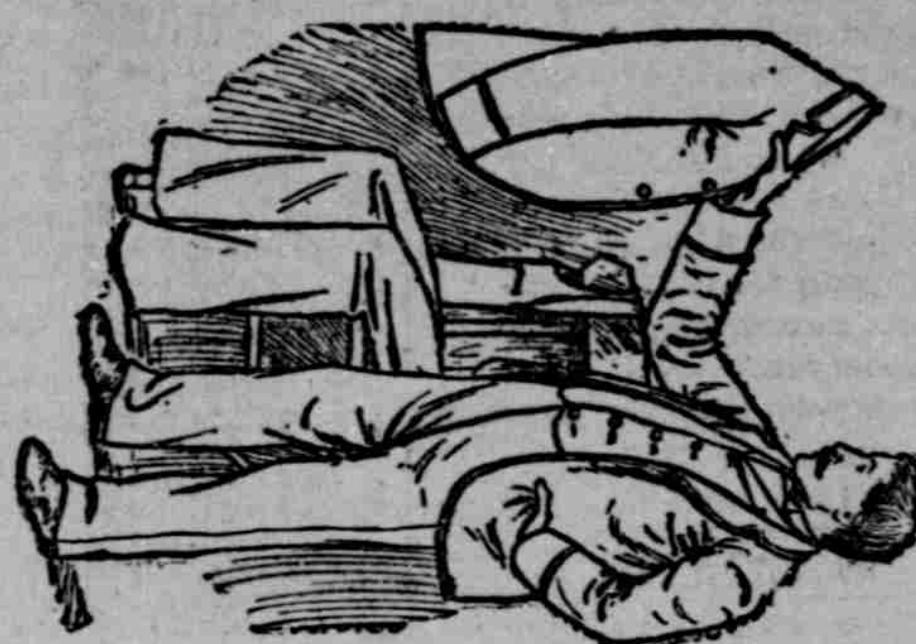
There is an old story of a man who rose up in an assemblage of his fellow-citizens and with a missile in his raised hand remarked, threateningly, "I am going to hit the fellow who told that whopping lie today." And thereat every man present ducked his head. This story is suggested by the consequences following the publication in the Journal of two weeks ago of a little incident which had occurred the previous Sunday in one of the city churches. It was, in brief, an account of the rude treatment received by two strangers from a pew-holder, whose seat they had been shown by the usher. The church where the affair happened was not mentioned, but, as since appears, readers of the paper promptly located it. One good brother, in a church not far from University square, was so sure that he knew where the blame lay that he called his pastor's attention to the story, and that gentleman, on last Sunday morning, prefaced his sermon with a rebuke to his congregation for its unchristian conduct that turned its innocent ears. In each of three other churches in sight of University square, members have discussed this matter and have fixed the blame upon a certain sister. Other congregations are yet to hear from. In relating the incident the Journal aimed at but one offender, but its success in bowling down half a dozen at once not only proves anew its keenness and accuracy, but proves several things less admirable in regard to the manners of the sanctuary. The Journal will continue to keep its eye on the churches.

A gentleman of this city who recently went on a hunting excursion to Brown county was astonished at the primitive character of the country and people. He saw numbers of men dressed in an outlandish garment made of striped bed-ticking, the garment being a sort of overall, shirt and pantaloons, all of one piece. Most of the men he met were barefooted, although the weather was quite cold. Ox teams are common, and "Woe, haw, buck, and Gee, Brindle," in the drawing tone of the native bull-puncher, greeted the ear constantly. One day the hunter came across a school-house, and entering it, found the school in charge of a youth about nineteen years old, while among the pupils was a man of forty-five sitting, barefooted, with a slate before him, trying to learn to write. The people seemed to know next to nothing of the outside world, and looked on an Indianapolis man with wonder and awe. Yet he found them honest, good-hearted and hospitable. The party this gentleman was with bagged plenty of birds and killed something less than a cart-load of rabbits. The natives said there were four or five deer in the county, and wild turkeys in the southern part. The great obstacle to hunting is the density of the forests and undergrowth.

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A Merry Christmas

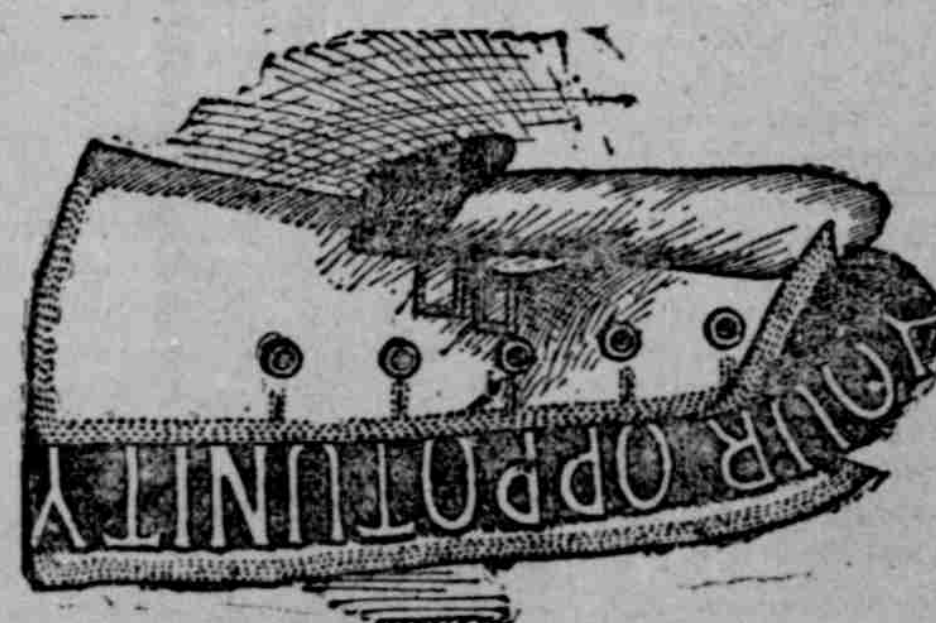


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